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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 14 May 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ASSISTANCE (agenda item 4) (continued)

(b) HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMMES, INCLUDING REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS, RETURNEES AND THE UNDP RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES (DP/1992/19)

1. Mr. PRIESTLEY (Senior Adviser to the Administrator on Humanitarian Programmes, UNDP) introducing the report on activities undertaken during 1991 under the UNDP Humanitarian Programme, said that the report had been drafted several months earlier and might no longer be fully up to date in respect of some emergency situations. He would be able to provide more recent information to delegations on request. It should also be noted that, in paragraph 50, the Administrator was recommending an extension of the Humanitarian Programme until the end of 1993 and not 1992 as erroneously stated.

2. Regarding the progress made by UNDP in carrying out the tasks entrusted to it by General Assembly resolution 46/182 on strengthening the coordination of United Nations humanitarian emergency assistance, he wished to point out first of all that the Humanitarian Programme had helped to develop new procedures for inter-agency needs assessment in the field with a view to launching consolidated system-wide appeals such as the appeal for the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa. It was to be hoped that the new integrated programming approach, which was to be further developed in similar appeals being prepared under the auspices of the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs, would result in improved coordination and integration of humanitarian operations in the field.

3. Resolution 46/182 also assigned to UNDP, on the basis of its development mandate, a key role resting on the concept of the relief-to-development continuum. That concept called for the whole of the development assistance system to be brought to bear in a concerted and expeditious manner in emergencies to mitigate the suffering of the affected population, to embark immediately on recovery activities and to facilitate the formulation of prevention and preparedness strategies. With the experience gained over the years by all the parties concerned, it should be possible to apply the relief-to-development concept with the necessary flexibility.

4. UNDP's main tool for that purpose was the country programme, which had therefore had to be oriented to recovery operations, as had been done recently in Ethiopia and Malawi. Ongoing programmes in vulnerable countries should also be adapted so that funds could be released more quickly for relief activities. In addition, UNDP was involved in efforts for the reintegration of returning refugees and internally displaced persons, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and was seeking to clarify the individual and joint responsibilities of those bodies. In the light of previous experience in that field, particularly in the context of the Development Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees (PRODERE) and the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA), UNDP should in future be able to apply a number of lessons concerning the need for maximum delegation of managerial and financial

authority to the field, the promotion of grass-roots participation, the adoption of a multisectoral approach for the needy residents of a particular geographical area and the mobilization of resources for longer-term integration.

5. UNDP was also continuing to cooperate with UNHCR, Governments, donors and other organizations of the United Nations system to address the needs of long-term refugees in developing countries as part of the follow-up to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA II). It had furthermore played an active role in the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Working Group on Early Warning Regarding New Flows of Refugees and Displaced Persons, and it was to be hoped that practical measures to involve resident coordinators in early warning would be put in place during 1993.

6. UNDP field offices were essential to United Nations humanitarian assistance efforts, providing the bulk of the support needed for inter-agency coordination activities at the country level. At its February 1992 session, the Governing Council had approved funding for such activities from the Special Programme Resources (SPR). UNDP was also exploring ways of drawing on experienced staff already in the field to make up the core of a stand-by reserve of professionals ready to assist with new emergencies. The Disaster Management Training Programme sponsored by UNDP and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) was proceeding as planned with support from donors and participating agencies. In accordance with resolution 46/182, an internal working group had furthermore drafted a set of special financial, administrative and personnel procedures to be applied by UNDP in emergency situations.

7. UNDP's Humanitarian Programme would provide all possible support to the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The Programme's main tasks over the next 18 months would involve working with field offices in country programming and project formulation, so as to include the "recovery" dimension where appropriate; developing new returnee reintegration programmes in conjunction with UNHCR, UNICEF and WPF; managing the Special Programme Resources (SPR) allocated for disaster mitigation with the other units concerned; continuing the Disaster Management Training Programme; and implementing the recommendations on evaluation, including the establishment of an institutional memory relating to emergencies. In that context, and bearing in mind the growing number of emergencies, the extension of the Humanitarian Programme until 1993, as proposed in document DP/1992/19, was essential for UNDP to meet its obligations under resolution 46/182.

8. Mr. DOHERTY (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said that numerous decisions and resolutions of United Nations organs recognized the urgent need for inter-agency cooperation to integrate relief assistance for refugees, returnees and displaced persons into wider development-related activities in the host countries and communities. The question then arose as to what the main objectives of joint operation should be in the immediate future. Taking account of the positive political changes around the world and the new opportunities for solutions to a number of refugees problems, UNHCR had made 1992 the year of voluntary repatriation. In that regard, concerted efforts were needed not only to realize the new hopes

but also to face up to the more complex challenges of the reintegration and resettlement of the persons concerned. UNHCR strongly advocated enhanced cooperation with the relevant international organizations and interested agencies and NGOs were also important partners in these operations.

9. However, the impending repatriation movements and reintegration activities were confronted with major obstacles: the size and high cost of refugee-assistance operations; the situation of the countries of return, most of which were among the least developed in the world and lacking in basic socio-economic infrastructures, often as a result of protracted political conflicts; the importance of addressing also the needs of the host communities, which were at times as compelling as those of the returnees; and the insecurity of many areas in which returnees sought to be reintegrated. The question was how, under such conditions, could refugees and other uprooted populations be repatriated in an orderly and dignified manner and how, once they had returned, could they be helped to lead viable lives.

10. In simple terms, the viability of the return to and readjustment process in the countries of origin depended on how far short-term relief assistance could be merged into longer-term essential development-related activities. As a major interlocutor with Governments on development policies and their execution, UNDP had a crucial role to play in promoting the durable reintegration of returnees. It had to assume the primary responsibility for incorporating returnee needs into government plans. The diversity and complexity of returnee programmes made it necessary to emphasize accurate definition of the capacities and responsibilities of the parties involved and maintain flexibility in the demarcation of functions. At the same time, a coordinated response required a common appreciation of the tasks to be accomplished and harmonization of the definitions of such key operational concepts as rehabilitation, reconstruction, resettlement and reintegration. In that regard, progress had been made in a number of cases - Malawi was an example - towards incorporating refugee-related activities integrally into the country programmes.

11. UNHCR, had a long tradition of cooperation with NGOs and believed that their know-how and expertise at the community level complemented the broader-based activities of United Nations bodies. The question of international development assistance to impoverished areas of the world, where outward migratory flows were likely to occur, was the reverse side of the relief-to-development continuum and called for preventive development measures to avoid the obvious humanitarian consequences. In that connection, UNHCR wished to support the Administrator's recommendations on the continuation of UNDP's Humanitarian Programme.

12. Mr. LUNDBORG (Observer for Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that they had, on various occasions, called for a system-wide approach to respond promptly and in a more cohesive manner to the needs of refugees, returnees and displaced persons. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/182 had given the United Nations a clear mandate to play a leading and coordinating role in responding to emergencies and in formulating strategies linking emergency assistance and long-term development. The delegations of the Nordic countries thus believed that UNDP's role needed to be strengthened in areas where it had a comparative advantage over other

organizations. In the first place, it could promote development-based prevention and preparedness strategies for recipient countries through special capacity-building and training. The Disaster Management Training Programme should therefore be expanded and integrated into a common United Nations training strategy. The fruitful cooperation between UNDP and UNDRO in that area was certainly to be welcomed. Secondly, UNDP had a role in formulating and implementing strategies to connect humanitarian assistance with sustainable development efforts. Thirdly, in emergencies, the UNDP resident representatives serving as coordinators for the United Nations system should, in close cooperation with national authorities, identify the most urgent needs and coordinate relief operations at the country level. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182, the resident representatives should also be prepared to initiate development-based prevention strategies and play a leading role in the transition from relief and recovery activities to sustainable development. To perform all those functions and give the necessary priority to humanitarian assistance efforts, they needed to be properly equipped. That raised the question as to how the activities of the resident coordinators should be financed. And, if the coordinating capacity of the entire United Nations system needed to be strengthened, he wondered whether it was appropriate for UNDP to carry the whole burden.

13. Document DP/1992/19 enumerated the assistance activities undertaken by UNDP in 1991, but did not define clearly where it had a comparative advantage over other organizations in ensuring continuity between relief and development programmes. At previous Council sessions, the Nordic delegations had expressed reservations about the establishment of a separate humanitarian assistance support unit within UNDP, believing that, for the time being, UNDP should focus on emergency response and rehabilitation within the framework of the country programmes. However, they recognized that the Humanitarian Programme had an important role to play in that regard. Accordingly, they endorsed the Administrator's recommendation that the Programme should be continued until 1993. In that connection, they would appreciate receiving a report from the Administrator on future staffing needs in the context of the system-wide review to be conducted by the Secretary-General.

14. Mr. NIE Hualiang (China), said that, since the Council's previous session, when it had been decided to establish a humanitarian programme, UNDP had considerably extended its activities in that field. Thus, in China, where there had been serious floods in the summer of 1991, the UNDP Resident Coordinator, had appealed to the international community and relief agencies which had succeeded, thanks to close cooperation, in taking effective action to assist the disaster-stricken areas. Those activities, which were fully consistent with General Assembly resolution 46/182, had produced remarkable results, and his delegation was extremely grateful to UNDP for its efforts.

15. His Government was in favour of the proposal, submitted at the previous session of the General Assembly, to prepare a strategy to strengthen the rapid response systems, and his delegation intended to participate actively in that endeavour. It also supported the Governing Council's initiative aimed at linking disaster relief and assistance to displaced persons with long-term development.

16. His delegation considered that the Humanitarian Programme should be retained, and thought it desirable to enlarge its scope. In that connection, it hoped that UNDP would give a greater role to the resident coordinators and strengthen its coordination capability in emergency situations in the interests of greater cooperation with the specialized agencies and the Governments of the recipient countries.

17. Mr. KOIKE (Japan) said that it was appropriate that UNDP was playing an active role in humanitarian assistance, in the interests of ensuring continuity between emergency relief and rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. UNDP and the United Nations organs responsible for such assistance, such as WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR had complementary functions and the Programme was called upon to play its part in ensuring that developmental considerations were taken into account at the initial stage of relief activities. For example, in Cambodia, where UNHCR was to undertake repatriation and initial settlement of refugees and displaced persons, UNDP was responsible for creating favourable development conditions which would make it possible to resolve longer-term problems. The memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations in that regard was a landmark, and his delegation would be closely monitoring its implementation. Similarly, the Disaster Management Training Programme, launched jointly by UNDP and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator, to provide assistance in the event of disaster was a good example of inter-agency cooperation. His delegation was pleased to note that UNV was also providing increasing support for such humanitarian action. It hoped that UNDP would also continue to participate actively in the work of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) and the Advisory Committee on Coordination (ACC) Working Group on Early Warning Regarding New Flows of Refugees and Displaced Persons.

18. Concerning UNDP's Humanitarian Programme, his delegation had not been certain, at the Council's thirty-eighth session, that it was really necessary to establish a D-2 post to head the proposed staff, and had only accepted the creation of that post on a provisional basis. Since the indications given by the Administrator did not really justify the retention of the existing posts, particularly the D-2 post, his delegation maintained its reservations, and requested further details on the four professional posts for which UNDP hoped to continue to provide financing.

19. At its special session in February 1992, the Council had authorized UNDP to allocate up to $50,000 from the SPR to provide limited direct assistance to disaster-affected populations, provided that no other United Nations body was mandated to provide commodity assistance to those populations. The purpose of that limitation was to ensure that the available funds would be used mainly to finance the resident coordinator's activities, in the interests of avoiding duplication. However, in Nicaragua, UNDP and UNICEF had provided exactly the same materials by way of disaster-relief, which clearly ran counter to the Governing Council's decision. His delegation would appreciate an explanation on that matter.

20. Mr. BELL (India) recalled that, during its consideration of the Special Programme Resources (SPR) for the fifth cycle, the Governing Council had held a lengthy debate on the question of establishing the point at which UNDP

should intervene in mitigating the effects of disasters; some had taken the view that the Programme should not commit itself too soon in fields in which other United Nations bodies were already intervening. It had also been clearly stipulated that the SPR should be reserved for activities relating to the principal spheres of competence of UNDP, namely, coordination, preparation and support.

21. The argument in favour of continuity in operations from assistance to development was not in itself unsound, but its validity was largely a function of the specific situation. In Cambodia, the Programme had rightly intervened from the outset, with UNHCR, WFP and other organs, in order to ensure that continuity, but that example should not be made the rule, unless development was merely to be made a positive outcome of disasters. UNDP's primary task was to encourage economic growth and sustainable development which, as General Assembly resolution 46/182 recalled, were essential in preventing disasters and planning in advance for their occurrence.

22. Mr. LENZI (Italy) said that UNDP had an important role to play in coordinating the activities of the United Nations system in emergency situations so as to ensure continuity in operations from immediate assistance to rehabilitation and development. The closest possible cooperation with the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs was vital in that regard. In prevention and prior planning, the essential role of UNDP should be to assist Governments to prepare emergency plans, in which priority should be given to the full involvement of local communities, an aspect which had been hitherto relatively neglected by the international community. Close cooperation was necessary in that field with the WHO Emergency Unit. UNDP could also set up an information system to provide donors, within the first 72 hours of a disaster, with the relevant information concerning aid needs, a system which would eliminate overlapping and inappropriate action and could form part of the early-warning activities entrusted to the resident coordinators.

23. UNDP could also play a more important role in supporting programmes aimed at human development, particularly in conflict and problem areas. Some experience had already been gained in that regard within the framework of pilot regional programmes, such as PRODERE in Central America. Specific lessons could be learned from an analysis of the achievements and possible shortcomings of such programmes. UNDP had made praiseworthy efforts to establish close collaboration with UNHCR and to link projects which had an immediate impact on refugees and repatriated persons with rehabilitation and development programmes. However, it was essential, particularly in the case of Cambodia, to refrain from drawing an unduly rigid distinction between the two types of activities.

24. Mr. CARMICHAEL (Canada) said that his delegation was particularly satisfied with the Disaster Managerment Training Programme, the coordination activities undertaken by UNDP and the links that were being developed with NGOs in disaster prevention, preparedness, relief and recovery. The displacement of populations, and the need for reintegration and rehabilitation to which they gave rise, lent growing importance to the Programme's systematic collaboration with UNHCR and the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Considerable progress had been made in that direction, as was illustrated by the joint operations carried out in Central America and Cambodia, but further

efforts should be made, particularly in terms of developing and clarifying joint strategies for the resettlement of refugees and rehabilitation activities. In Cambodia, for example, UNHCR was responsible for repatriation and UNDP for resettlement, but there was a disagreement between them regarding the appropriate strategy for resettlement. His delegation urged the two organs to resolve that disagreement as soon as possible.

25. His delegation had resolutely supported the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and would encourage UNDP and the other organs concerned to establish formal working arrangements with the Department as soon as possible. Any UNDP intervention in humanitarian assistance or relief should fall within the overall coordination of the new Department, particularly in the case of Cambodia. The arrangements to be established with the Department could obviously have implications for the future of UNDP's newly-created Humanitarian Programme. Two senior officials of the Programme, who were responsible for the Horn of Africa, were to be transferred to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. His delegation did not fully understand the relationship between that transfer and the staffing needs of the UNDP Humanitarian Programme; nor could it clearly discern what the Programme intended to do in the long term in the field of humanitarian assistance or how it envisaged its staffing needs, bearing in mind the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. While it did not for the moment object to the continued funding of the Humanitarian Programme until the end of 1993, it assumed that, in the meantime, UNDP and the Department would have established clear terms and conditions. Only then would it be possible to reach a decision whether the Humanitarian Programme should continue to be financed for the following biennium.

26. Mr. ELLIS (United Kingdom) said his delegation welcomed the appointment of an Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and hoped that UNDP would make every effort to ensure the success of the strengthened United Nations humanitarian aid capacity. The resident representatives had a vital role to play in the system, since local coordination of donor activities was essential to the success of any relief operation or rehabilitation programme. His Government had always supported the Disaster Management Training Programme, and urged other interested donors to do likewise, so as to ensure that it was fully funded.

27. His delegation also welcomed the various initiatives undertaken in cooperation with UNHCR, UNV and non-governmental organizations, but it thought that document DP/1992/19 could have contained more information on the results achieved by those initiatives and on any problems that had arisen. It would also like to know whether the studies referred to in paragraphs 17 to 19 of the document were readily available for consultation by the Member States and whether they would be studied and used by the staff of the Disaster Management Training Programme. Similarly, paragraph 25 gave too little detail on the nature and status of the project for the establishment of a disaster preparedness agency in the Caribbean.

28. His Government had supported most of the relief actions mentioned in section III of the report, and would continue to do so if UNDP maintained the

quality of its coordination activities. His delegation endorsed the Administrator's recommendation regarding the retention of UNDP's Humanitarian Programme until the end of 1993.

29. Mr. SHEIKH (Pakistan) said his delegation supported the Administrator's recommendation that four professional posts should continue to be funded under the current arrangements. Afghan refugees in Pakistan represented the world's largest displacement of people, and their voluntary repatriation, which had begun in July 1990 thanks to the joint efforts of UNHCR and WFP, was proceeding at a slow pace. In 1990, the Administrator had sent a survey team to evaluate the scale and cost of the damage caused by the presence of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The detailed report submitted by the team in September 1990 indicated that forests, grazing land, roads and canals had reached a critical stage of deterioration which called for resolute action. According to the team, a large number of reconstruction projects could be completed even before the refugees left Pakistan. High, medium or low priority had been accorded to each project, and the total cost of the high-priority projects had been estimated at $102 million over five years. His Government had accepted the conclusions of the report, with some modifications, and had informed UNDP accordingly. The Programme would soon be in a position to present a final report to the donors with a view to requesting financial assistance.

30. His delegation also appreciated the rehabilitation and reconstruction projects financed and carried out by UNDP in Afghanistan. The projects would undoubtedly facilitate the rapid return of refugees to their homeland. For its part, his Government was also helping to expedite that repatriation by various forms of assistance, and appreciated the assistance provided by UNDP and UNHCR in that regard.

31. Mr. MOORE (United States of America) said that his Government appreciated the attention given to refugee and returnee aid and development but considered that UNDP had not yet fully addressed the problems connected with the rapid planning and implementation of programmes in that field. The experience of CIREFCA in Central America had been valuable, particularly with regard to quick impact projects, which needed to be pursued. His Government would be closely monitoring UNDP's technical assistance programmes in Central America to ensure that the needs of refugees and returnee populations were taken into account in formulating the medium- and long-term development strategies of the Governments. It hoped that UNDP would make such rapid planning and implementation a priority objective in its humanitarian programmes.

32. As the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs had recalled, resolution 46/182 afforded priority to the continuum of operations from relief to rehabilitation to development and to the role that UNDP must play in it. It remained for all to identify effective and innovative ways of making those principles a reality. His delegation supported the Administrator's recommendations that the Humanitarian Programme be approved for the balance of the 1992-1993 biennium, including the continued funding of the four professional posts under the current arrangements. It expected, however, that the proposals concerning the Programme for the 1994-1995 biennium would take fully into account the role and staffing of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

33. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that, in his report, the Administrator referred to consultations regarding coordination between UNDP, the specialized agencies and NGOs with a view to finding practical measures for encouraging coordination in the field of prevention and response in cases of disaster, but he had omitted to mention the competent governmental agencies.

34. Ms. SCHAEFER-PREUSS (Germany) said she fully supported the comments made by the Canadian delegation. Her Government appreciated the work done by UNDP in promoting development-based prevention and preparedness strategies, one example being the Disaster Management Training Programme to which it had made a substantial financial contribution. UNDP had made commendable efforts to improve its own administrative and operational procedures in the continuum from relief to development. Her Government fully supported a coordinated approach both inside and outside the United Nations system.

35. Nevertheless, the primary mission of UNDP dealt not with relief but with long-term development, capacity-building and reconstruction activities. In crisis situations, UNDP action should basically be directed towards the design and implementation of programmes and projects even when the resident representative or coordinator was to some extent under the umbrella of the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator. In connection with UNDP's participation in the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), there would seem to be room for improvement both on substantive issues and on implementation at the field level.

36. Much also remained to be done in harmonizing, rationalizing or strengthening existing arrangements with a view to achieving a more effective system of humanitarian assistance in development. UNDP should therefore retain its Humanitarian Programme until the end of 1993 and the Administrator should submit to the Governing Council at its next session a report or detailed proposals like those which the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs had outlined in his statement. It should also define UNDP's future role in the transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, in close collaboration with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Future joint involvement of UNDP and UNV should also be clearly defined.

37. Mr. BROUWERS (Netherlands) said his delegation attached great importance to the arrangements between UNDP and the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs and hoped that they would shortly be in place. It welcomed the fact that UNDP was currently allocating some $30 million of IPF resources for disaster mitigation purposes. Those projects were important and fitted perfectly into the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. The UNDP resident representatives were indeed essential elements in the system for the collection and transmission of information in crisis situations, but NGOs had also an essential role to play in that regard, particularly when UNDP staff members did not have access to the entire territory of the country concerned. The role of the UNDP field office was to centralize such information and transmit it to the relevant decision-making centres. His delegation urged UNDP to strengthen its collaboration with NGOs in the field of data collection.

38. In paragraph 50 of the report, it was proposed to maintain the UNDP Humanitarian Programme, including the financing of two posts at headquarters from the Special Programme Resources (SPR). The issue of maintaining the Programme was linked to the integration of UNDP's humanitarian activities into those of the United Nations system as a whole. In view of the fact that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs had just been established, it would perhaps be better to defer the question until the next session of the Governing Council. His delegation was, in principle, opposed to financing headquarters posts from the SPR and would like to know whether, in the case of other SPR-financed activities, the support posts at headquarters were also financed from the SPR or were imputed to the core budget.

39. Mr. DORANI (Djibouti) said that, since independence, his country had not ceased to suffer the disastrous consequences of the Somalo-Ethiopian war followed by civil wars in the neighbouring countries. The refugee flows created by those wars and the important community of displaced persons living in Djibouti represented a very heavy charge with regard both to security and the economy. UNDP's humanitarian action had been very helpful, particularly in periods of crisis but, like the international community in general, it appeared to regard the refugee problem basically in human terms, while somewhat neglecting its negative impact on the host country's infrastructure and economy. In the view of his delegation, while it was desirable to solve refugee problems, aid for recovery and development was imperative. In conclusion, he mentioned that, on that very day, a conference on the Palestinian refugees, the first of its kind, was to open at Ottawa. He proposed that the President should, on behalf of the Council, make a statement wishing every success to that meeting.

40. Ms. DEWARAJA (Sri Lanka) said that she had been pleased to read in document DP/1992/19 that cooperation between UNDP and UNHCR would give a new priority to returnee aid and development. Her delegation appreciated the role played by UNDP and by other relief agencies during the Gulf war, particularly through its special working group. The intervention of UNDP in that field should not, however, distract it from its traditional role of promoting long-term development, particularly as, in assuming that role, it helped to make developing countries less vulnerable to disasters.

41. Mr. GUBARTALLA (Observer for the Sudan) said his delegation was in favour of UNDP continuing its disaster-prevention activities within the framework of General Assembly resolution 46/211. His Government relied greatly on coordination between UNDP and the other agencies involved in implementing programmes of urgent assistance such as the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa. Referring to the problems of absorption, which prevented tens of thousands of refugees in that region from returning to their countries as they wished, his delegation urged UNDP to fulfil its coordinating role there also. Lastly, it wished to stress the importance of the organic linkage between humanitarian assistance and sustained development.

42. Mr. GOMEZ (Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said it was essential that discussion should continue regarding the continuum of assistance and development. The volume of the resources involved was very large though still insufficient. Account must also be taken of the need to improve the effectiveness of operations by making maximum use of the advantages

of each agency. UNDP's trump card was that it was permanently present in the countries and to that must be added the coordination role given to the resident representatives. UNDP's intervention in crisis situations did not, however, in any way change its traditional fundamental role, which was reconstruction and development. Concerning Cambodia, he wished to make it clear that all UNDP activities in that country were subordinated to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia.

43. UNDP hoped to coordinate its activities as closely as possible with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as soon as the latter was organized and was awaiting its guidelines both for headquarters and the field. Concerning logistic errors, resulting from differences of procedure between organizations and of regulations between Governments, even the best coordinated operations were not always exempt. Such errors were to be regretted and efforts would be made to prevent their repetition.

44. In reply to the German delegation, he said that the Governing Council had determined the direction of UNDP for the next five years and had decided the allocation of SPR funds so as to strengthen national capacity. It was therefore difficult to depart from the framework thus established. That having been said, the Programme would make efforts, in emergency situations, to adapt country programmes to needs.

45. The proposal to establish an international development council was a good idea, which would facilitate the unification and centralization of information.

46. Mr. PRIESTLEY (Senior Adviser to the Administrator on Humanitarian Programmes, UNDP) told the members of the Governing Council that their comments would help to define the modalities of UNDP cooperation with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and its other partners, both inside and outside the system. UNDP had participated actively in the discussions which had led up to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/182 and subsequent resolutions. It had also seconded two experts from its Humanitarian Programme to the Department. It was therefore closely associated with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, and there was no need to fear that it would depart from that line.

47. He outlined the tremendous difficulties which had been met in implementing refugees reintegration programmes. Many of those programmes had been prepared and planned but all, except in Cambodia where cooperation was continuing, had been blocked pending the return of peace in the countries concerned. To that must be added problems of financing, and relations between Governments and NGOs. The latter were an unrivalled source of information because they were established in the field and UNDP's Humanitarian Programme had set up a programme of monthly meetings. He hoped that that cooperation would prosper.

48. Concerning the financing of the support for resident coordinators, the coordination of activities in emergency situations clearly required staff in order to be effective: it was therefore expensive. Donors had generally responded to requests for financing but it would be desirable that their aid should be more structured and reliable. Another source of financing, at least

in the early stages, could be the Central Emergency Revolving Fund but, by definition, its resources had to be replenished. For the moment, the A2 and A4 tranches of the SPR were being used but, in the future, the intention was to include the coordination costs in the joint inter-agency appeals. In that connection, UNDP would conform with the decisions to be taken by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

49. In reply to the delegation of Japan, he said that UNDP was supporting the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) and recalled that the Disaster Management Training Programme had been recognized as a model project.

50. As for the staffing of UNDP's Humanitarian Programme, he recalled that the Governing Council had approved four posts in 1991: one post at the D-2 level, to be filled by a person with long experience in the field and in emergency situations; one post at the P-5 level, currently occupied by Mr. Peter Witham; one L-5 post, to be filled, as the previous incumbent had been seconded to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs; and one L-4 post provided for until the end of the biennium. The D-2 and P-5 posts were financed from the core budget. The L-4 and L-5 posts, on the other hand, were financed from the SPR, as was logical since the activities of their incumbents included a catalytic element in keeping with the criterion for those resources.

51. In reply to the Indian delegation, he confirmed that the role of UNDP was, first and foremost, a development one, but disaster mitigation activities were also useful in that connection and UNDP had attempted to use the Indian experience in that field for the benefit of other countries. As for reintegration, the importance of the local communities, emphasized by the representatives of Italy, was undoubted and UNDP took the needs of host communities into account. The Humanitarian Programme, on the other hand, maintained very close relations with the WHO Emergency Unit and hoped to strengthen those links.

52. Document DP/1992/19 did not contain a detailed description of the successes and failures of UNDP. The officials of the Humanitarian Programme, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA had recently decided to meet regularly in order to discuss their joint activities in reintegration programmes. Their second meeting was to be held on 18 May and UNDP hoped to be able to strengthen that promising process. He thanked the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Germany, Netherlands and Finland for their generous contributions in support of the Disaster Management Training Programme and hoped to receive other contributions to the total of $2 million needed for its work up to the end of 1993.

53. He wished to assure the representative of Canada that the apparent differences between various United Nations bodies on the subject of Cambodia were currently being resolved. In reply to the representative of the United Kingdom, he said that the UNDP project for the Caribbean countries (DP/1992/19, para. 25) had been approved in February 1992 and would very shortly be started. Likewise, the large recovery programme for the enormous

refugee population in Pakistan should be implemented in the near future. For the information of the representative of the United States, who had raised the question of the implementation of the humanitarian programmes, he would like to say that that question had been given high priority by UNDP.

54. The representative of Djibouti had rightly drawn attention to a situation to which UNDP had not been able to find an adequate solution. Refugees were unfortunately so well integrated into the urban structure of Djibouti that it would be very difficult to organize their repatriation or reinstallation without seriously disturbing the local markets.

55. The PRESIDENT said that the discussion on the question of UNDP's humanitarian programmes, including refugees, displaced persons, returnees and the UNDP response to emergencies, had come to an end. He proposed that the matter should be submitted to the Drafting Group to allow it to prepare a draft decision.

56. It was so decided.

57. The meeting was suspended at 12.20 p.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR 1991 AND PRIORITY AREAS IDENTIFIED THEREIN (HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT) (agenda item 2) (continued) (DP/1992/12 and Add.1, 2 and 4-6)

58. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) summarized the high-level debate. He noted that his annual report and introductory address had found a positive echo and that, in particular, the members of the Council unanimously agreed that, in a changing world, the United Nations system had also to change. Other organizations and agencies of the system had already expressed themselves or would soon express themselves on that issue before the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, although he noted that UNESCO had already expressed strong support in the Governing Council of the idea of a single integrated United Nations field team. Such support should reassure those who felt that coordination between UNDP and the specialized agencies was not regular enough.

59. The debate had left no doubt that the United Nations system had a special role to play in economic and social affairs, on account of its neutrality and universality and of the inextricable link between peace and development with social justice. Many delegations believed in the need to take advantage of UNDP's comparative advantages in development cooperation, and that the Programme should be not merely a fund manager but a genuine development institution, that it was well placed for capacity-building and that its role henceforth lay further "upstream" where the dialogue on appropriate policies took place. UNDP was, of course, deeply committed to its key role as coordinator of the activities undertaken at the country level by the system as a whole and it was at that level, as many speakers had observed, that the United Nations system could be most effective. That in no way diminished the value of cooperation at the headquarters level. Moreover, several delegations had stressed that UNDP would have to face challenges both at headquarters and in the field, and that it would thus require high-quality staff, as had also been pointed out by many speakers.

60. Several delegations had warned UNDP against the risk of dispersion, and had remarked, for example, that it would be more appropriate for the Department of Political Affairs to provide assistance to countries in the field of elections and governance. In fact, UNDP had given such assistance only to those countries that had requested it, and in most cases, at the instigation of the Secretary-General through the Department of Political Affairs. In that respect, UNDP's advantage lay in its extensive field presence, which was a further argument for having a presence in every country it served.

61. Several delegations had raised the question of the type of assistance UNDP could provide in response to disasters, and especially in response to AIDS. There seemed to be a consensus that UNDP should concentrate on rehabilitation and development within the framework of the major humanitarian assistance programmes due to be launched, for example, in Cambodia, in the Horn of Africa and in southern Africa, where it would strive to close the development gap mentioned by the representative of UNHCR. With regard to the AIDS pandemic, he assured the Council that UNDP was wholly committed to its alliance with WHO, and that the disagreements that had arisen between the two organizations were being settled. In the multisectoral area of the environment, which encompassed virtually all the fields covered by the United Nations system, the consensus that had emerged from the debate was that UNDP's essential task was to help developing countries to integrate environment and development and to build capacities for sustainable development. Moreover, several delegations had remarked on the need to strengthen the resources UNDP would have to devote to the environment, both at headquarters and at the country level. The Programme had already taken several steps in that direction; it would review its requirements after UNCED and would submit proposals to the Governing Council at its next session.

62. He had devoted much of his annual report to detailing how UNDP was responding to General Assembly resolution 44/211. On the whole, the members of the Council approved the changes that had been made to the country programmes, which some delegations had proposed to rename "country strategies", and had even mentioned the possibility of a common system-wide country strategy, which would be a more appropriate term for the integrated United Nations country programme which he himself had proposed. Regarding national execution, some specialized agencies had voiced the fear that UNDP's own Office for Project Services and its field offices were taking over functions which should reside with the national authorities. That was by no means the case, as neither UNDP nor the specialized agencies, as some members of the Council had pointed out, should be in the driver's seat. However, as other delegations had also observed, national execution should not be at the expense of quality or of capacity-building, which was essential. The slow-down noted in the rate of UNDP approvals was also a source of concern to some. In actual fact, the phenomenon recurred whenever a new programming cycle began, and it was not only normal but desirable, as resources were still limited at that stage.

63. Many members of the Council had advocated the introduction of management procedures designed to improve monitoring and evaluation, the adoption of performance indicators or further delegation to country offices. UNDP intended to develop delegation further, without however abdicating

its responsibilities. Several delegations had advocated further cuts in the administrative budget, emphasized the fundamental importance of cost-effectiveness or called for a reduction in senior posts. It was for the Council to decide on those issues, although he wished to remind it that a 15 per cent cut had already been made in the headquarters administrative budget. The Council should also bear in mind that, if UNDP was henceforth to be a true development institution, it would require the means to recruit and retain talented individuals.

64. The shortage of resources was of particular concern to Africa, as most countries in the sub-Saharan region had undertaken difficult and painful reform and adjustment programmes. Africa already received the bulk of the resources distributed by UNDP, which had also allocated sizeable SPR funds to finance major new regional initiatives there. Africa was thus still high on the UNDP agenda.

65. Regional cooperation also remained of vital importance, as several delegations had pointed out, and he reassured them that UNDP also gave high priority to TCDC. In particular, the Programme would always give priority to choosing experts from developing countries. In addition, as the Council had noted, the United Nations Volunteers continued to provide high-return services that were appreciated by many countries. Women in development was also a thematic focus in most country programmes.

66. The debate had reached a number of significant conclusions on the question of new member States: (1) existing criteria should be applied universally; (2) it was necessary to recognize the diversity of the new States, so that some of them, such as the States of Central Asia might be treated as "traditional" developing countries. However, many of those countries needed urgent assistance in support of their transition to market economies and democracy. Several of their representatives had emphasized that such aid would be solely temporary; (3) there was an overall consensus that the help given to the new States should not be at the expense of existing recipients. The preferred financial solution was to set up a trust fund, based on additionality, for a limited time; (4) several Eastern countries had expressed the wish for a United Nations presence. One suggestion had been that UNDP could provide coverage from offices in neighbouring countries; the Council had not settled upon the initial means of financing such offices in the countries in question, and there was some concern as to whether UNDP's core budget was capable of bearing the burden. In the view of many members of the Council, the costs of setting up a single unified United Nations office in those States should be shared among the various entities of the United Nations, and UNDP would spare no effort to ensure that such a solution was adopted in practice. There was no doubt that the coordinated and integrated response of the United Nations system to the needs of those new States would serve as an example for other regions.

67. As in the past, the Human Development Report 1992 had given rise to considerable debate and he would deliberately avoid replying to the substantive remarks that had been made since, if he did, it might undermine the report's independence. However, he pointed out that development was a complex process that involved a number of interrelated variables; consequently, as UNDP's task was to promote human development, none of those aspects could

be excluded from the study. Moreover, he emphasized that the report was prepared by an independent team of experts, funded by UNDP resources, and that their terms of reference were to analyse issues related to human development in an unbiased manner and from a technical angle. It was, moreover, that intellectual input which had been so much appreciated by the Council.

68. He acknowledged the offer made by Germany to host UNDP, its affiliates and UNFPA in Bonn, as from 1996, and looked forward with interest to the reaction of the member countries to that proposal.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.